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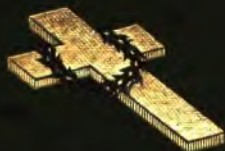
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LEAFLETS

FOR THE SICK & SUFFERING

Till the day break
and the Shadows flee away



"The heads that once were crowned with thorns
Are crowned with glory now"—





LEAFLETS

FOR THE

SICK AND SUFFERING.



LONDON: T. VERRINDER, 36, HIGH ST., KENSINGTON, W.

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PREFACE.

THESE Sermonettes were written from a distance to cheer the last days of one who, through much tribulation, has entered into the kingdom of God. They were, I am thankful to say, by God's blessing, a great comfort to her ; and at her special request, and that of her sorrowing mother and sister, I have ventured to publish them (abrupt and unstudied as they are) for the use of my own sick friends, and in the hope that they may also breathe a few words of comfort to some other members of the Body of Christ who are called upon to suffer according to the Will of God.

W. E. HAIGH.

KENSINGTON, 1881.

Anything read or said by the sick-bed should be read or said with reverence and sympathy; thoughtfully, gently, and slowly, and followed by a short and appropriate prayer.

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WHAT HAS GOD PREPARED FOR THEM THAT LOVE HIM?

HEAVEN will contain all that has made life beautiful on earth, and nothing that made it sorrowful. "He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. xi. 16).

Heaven will be a social world, with a sphere for the faculties of the spirit, and mind, and glorified body — a world of progress and growth "from glory to glory."

The spirit of man will be satisfied there. We shall see Him as He is, and be like Him. We shall be free at last from temptation, free from the constant struggles of our unruly wills. God's service will be at last perfect freedom.

The mind will be no more burdened with ignorance, and doubt, and fear, and mystery. We shall grow in wisdom and in knowledge.

The body will be no more liable to pain, and weakness, and death, no longer an impedi-

ment to the spirit, or the mind. We shall be like Him, "transformed, yet the same."

We shall have a full sphere for *the affections* which God has given us. We shall see, and know, and love our friends, as we never knew or loved them on earth, because all the prejudice and ignorance which prevented our knowing them fully on earth will be removed in that land of perfect light and love. Ah! we cannot paint Heaven. We must—we can—leave our future life there to Christ. "I go to prepare a place for you," were His own words. The Heaven He will choose for us will be Heaven indeed. He made us, and He knows best what is the Heaven we need.

Lord Jesus! we will leave our future to Thee, we can trust Thee, we are Thine. "Whether we wake or sleep we are the Lord's."

Dying, risen Lord! we look to Thee! as that poor thief did upon the cross; in our weakness, our sinfulness, and pain, we would but breathe that prayer, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." And to ask of Thee is to receive.

“SEEKING FOR JESUS.”

St. John vi. 24.

THE multitudes had been fed by Jesus; they knew there was something in *Him* that they could find nowhere else—they want to know more of Him—they enter their vessel, and cross the lake, and come to Capernaum, “seeking for Jesus.”

And you, weary one, long to know more of Jesus too.

How can you know more of Him? By reading carefully and prayerfully that Book which reveals Him, *i.e.*, the Bible.

“Seeking for Jesus”—what a motto for readers of the Bible.

Read the Book to know more of Jesus.

First, *seek* Him there as a *Saviour* from sin, whose death purchased life for thee, whose blood washes thee from daily sin, who will finally by His Divine grace redeem thee from all sin.

Secondly, seek Him there as *a sympathizing friend*—a physician of the soul and body, who knows all that troubles thee, loves thee, feels with thee, and will give thee some day a home in the tearless land.

Thirdly, seek Him there as *an example*. How to live.—How to suffer.—How to die.—How to trust in a Father's love amid the darkness.

Fourthly, seek Him there as *a teacher*, who tells thee the things that shall be, who teaches thee by His Holy Spirit where thou must otherwise be ignorant, teaches thee of the heavenly country, of the Father, of the angels, and the blessed ones in Paradise.

“Seeking for Jesus.” What a thought for those who pray, for those who are well, for those who suffer, for those who feel the burden of life, and long to be at rest.

Weary heart, tossed to and fro on the waves of this troublesome world, Jesus is on the other shore; this world is not thy rest. You seek a better land. You shall not be disappointed. On the other side is Jesus, still “ever the same” in His love and tenderness for man. Row on! toil on! in faith, and hope. Thou shalt yet see Him, and He will give thee rest; and not to thee only, but to all who love His *appearing*. Across the waters of thy stormy life,

through the darkness and through the pain,
there comes a sweet low voice, which speaks to
thy suffering, longing, anxious heart, "Come
unto me, ye that labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest."

“THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME, & GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME.”

Galatians ii. 20.

WHAT a sacred text! Holy ground. It brings us so near to Jesus, and Jesus so near to us, to each—to me.

First, notice how the love of Jesus comes home to each one of us—“loved *me*,” gave Himself for *me*. Yes, He died for all, but He died also for *me*. . . .

Secondly, who is Jesus? “The Son of God.” What a contrast to *me*, the sinful, fallen, suffering creature. . . .

Thirdly, what did the Son of God do for *me*? Gave Himself for *me*. Why? What was the motive of His sacrifice? *Love*. He loved *me*, and therefore He gave Himself for *me*. For love is ever the gift of self. What did Jesus give for me? *Himself*. Oh, what a

history is contained in those *two* words, "Gave Himself." . . . From the cradle to the cross, Jesus was "giving *Himself*" for me.

Oh, tender, matchless love! The poorest, weakest being in the whole world may look up to that once suffering, crucified Lord, and say, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for me."

A few more sweet and comforting thoughts.

"I am weak, and a sufferer, but Jesus gave Himself for me." I am unknown in this great world, lonely and bereaved, but Jesus, the Son of God, loves me, and "gave Himself for me."

Oh, what a dignity does this fact confer on my life; what a comfort in sorrow and trial! And our text—the fact which it declares is the *pledge* of all I want in the future. God offers me a home in Paradise—salvation from sin—freedom from pain and sorrow, in a brighter world—union with all I love—Why? For any merit of mine? No—but because the Son of God "gave Himself for me." Yes, trembling, weak, suffering child of sorrow, the Son of God loves you, and "the Father Himself loveth you," and "He that spared not His own Son"—but gave Him up for you—will He not with Him freely give you all things?

THREE FIGURES.

St. Luke vii. 36-50.

THREE figures stand before us in the history. The woman, the Pharisee, the Saviour. Our eyes rest especially upon two—the woman and the Lord.

They had probably met before. His words had kindled in her a new life. She had gone to Him, perhaps, some weeks or months before, and had won from Him pardon and peace. And now Jesus has come back again to the village where she lived. She longs to shew her love and gratitude: she draws near, and pours upon His feet the tears and sighs of a contrite and broken heart. And then comes the scene recorded in the narrative.

How it brings out *the contrast* between the sympathy of Jesus and the selfishness, and pride, and coldness of man. She stands there! The Pharisee could not understand the love;

which expressed itself in that flood of tears, but Jesus could. It is only they who have sinned much, and been so much forgiven, that can love as she did! As she stands there she knows that there is a Heart which understands hers—knows all—upbraids not—but has freely forgiven the past, and loves in spite of it; and hence her tears of joy. And we, weighed down with the burden of sin, may come to Thee, O blessed Jesus, still, and pour at Thy blessed feet the tears which tell of sorrow, and repentance, and contrition. Yes—

“Lord Jesus Christ, Thou, too, art man;
 Thou hast been troubled, tempted, tried;
 Thy kind but searching glance can scan
 The very wounds which shame would hide.”

We will open that bleeding heart to no other eyes but Thine, for in Thee alone we can find the sympathy, and pity, and the pardon that the sinner needs. Ah, Lord Jesus! Thou hast indeed forgiven us much. We cannot pay Thee in return. We can but give Thee the tears of penitence, the homage of a contrite heart which leans on Thee; and yet that is the very gift Thou dost long for most, and therefore we bring it to Thee.

It was once said by a great but poor man, while others gave great gifts to save his city

from ruin, "Alas! I can only contribute my tears."

And so, gazing at Thy cross, and thinking of Thy tender love and sympathy for me, and longing to do something for Thee, who hast done so much for me—"Alas!" I can but say, "I can only contribute my tears"—my tears of penitence, and gratitude, and joy;—let me bathe with them those blessed feet once pierced for me.

And He who saw the other woman cast those two mites into the treasury, and to whom all hearts are open, knows the love of which those tears are the expression.

Coming then, Lord Jesus, to Thee, and leaving at Thy feet the sorrows and sins of our daily life, may we ever hear Thy tender voice speaking to our weary, sinful hearts, "Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven."

“WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?
FOLLOW THOU ME.”

St. John xxi. 22.

WE all want and long to know the future—our own future, and that of our friends whom we love. It was this desire which prompted the question of St. Peter, “Lord, and what shall this man do?” But Jesus wills that His disciple should humbly follow Him in *trust*, and leave the future with *Him*; and to us, weary, and anxious, and uncertain as to all that lies before us on life’s rough journey, He also whispers, “Follow Me—only believe.”

The soldiers follow their leader in faith; they trust him. To one of them, if he demanded to know the plan of the campaign, the reason why he was to do this or that, an answer would be given, “What is that to thee?—follow thou me.”

And this is the answer of the great Captain of our salvation to His soldiers in the battle of life. An answer spoken in tenderness and in love—meant to inspire confidence and hope to the end.

Lord, my life is full of sadness, full of pain and suffering, it often seems so hard, so mysterious, that I should have so much to bear, while others have so little ! The Saviour turns and looks on thee in love. My child, what is that to thee ?—follow thou Me ; trudge on ; plant thy footsteps in Mine ; press on ; follow on ; and some day thou shalt look back and reap the reward of faith in that better land where thou shalt evermore be at rest. Yes, “ follow me.” I know how hard it is to do so. I have trodden the road before thee—it is worn with My weary feet, and wet with My tears ; but follow Me, and trust all to Me.

Oh, trembling sufferer ! oh, sad and weary heart ! carry all thy fears and cares to Jesus. Tell Him all ; and a still small voice shall breathe comfort on thy heart, and thou shalt find strength to shoulder the cross and bear it after Him. “ For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God ; to them who are the called according to His purpose ” (Romans viii. 28).

“IN DUE SEASON WE SHALL
REAP, IF WE FAINT NOT.”

Galatians vi. 9.

So much of our life here is broken—disappointing! Is there a “far-off interest” of my tears? (as the poet says.) Will all the failures, the sorrows of my life here, ever work together for good? Yes. We shall in *due season reap*. Your life may often seem a failure, but you shall yet reap something from the fallen, buried seeds of shattered hopes and joys. “In that day ye shall ask Me nothing.” “Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” In “*due season*”—in God’s own time—all trials and sorrows shall be done away, and the meaning of it all be clear to thee. Only trust—“we *shall* reap if we faint not.” We shall reach the land of promise if we faint not in the wilderness. Toil on. Trudge on. He knows thy

weakness—thy need—thy desires. And in that day when “He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied,” thou shalt be satisfied too ; for, having suffered with Him on earth, thou shalt reign with Him in heaven.

“O GOD, THOU ART MY GOD; I
WILL SEEK THEE.”

Psalm lxiii. 1.

O God! What a natural expression! The human heart looks upward in moments of thoughtfulness, and pain, and weakness, to its Father and Creator—and thinking of His power—His love—His eternity—says, *O GOD!* But we want something more than that! Does this Great Being care for *me*? Is there any nearer relation between us? Does He care for the individual me? Yes. Notice this little word “*my*.” “Thou art ‘*my*’ God.”

Yes, God is the Father and God of the *world*, but He is *my* God too. He thinks of *me*, loves *me*, cares for *me*. I am dear to Him, and may look up to Him in my weakness and pain; and in the thirsty land where no water is, of sorrow and trial, I may say, “*Thou art my God.*”

We have then two steps :

First, Belief in God—"O God."

Secondly, Then personal faith in this God as
"my God."

And from this comes—

Thirdly, Self-dedication to God—"I will
seek Thee." . . .

Yes, I will seek thee in pain—in sorrow—in
joy—in life—in death.

O FATHER, tossed and buffeted as I am and
may be on the waves of this troublesome world,
I will come to Thee as the tired bird comes to
its nest, for I know that Thou hast said, "Those
who seek Me shall find Me," and "him that
cometh to Me I will in nowise cast out."

“THAT HE MIGHT BEAR IT AFTER
JESUS.”

St. Luke xxiii. 26.

SIMON was compelled by the soldiers to carry the cross of Jesus; it was an ignominious task, and he no doubt thought it was too; but, oh! in after years, it was his greatest joy to look back and think that on him had been laid so great an honour.

A comfort to you!

The cross of suffering and pain has been laid on you. How hard and strange it sometimes seems! But wait—hereafter you shall see that this cross was the cross of Jesus, and out of it may come flowers and fruit in eternity. “What I do thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.”

Again,—

The text tells you that you are not alone

in your trial—Jesus is *before* you—you are following “*after*.” He has borne all before us. Oh, what a comfort and help. He, too, has suffered and sorrowed, and He can feel for me.

GOD has given you this trial—this heavy cross—that you may bear it after Jesus. And borne after Jesus, this suffering is borne *for* Jesus’ sake. What a thought! By bearing my cross, I am pleasing Him—serving Him—doing something for Him—perhaps witnessing to others of His strength and power in human weakness.

O Jesus! give me grace to follow Thee—like Thee I too often faint beneath the cross, but I am trying to follow Thee to the end, and to bear all for Thee.

And here is a word of cheer, “My child, ‘Be faithful to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’”

“CHOSEN.”

“I HAVE CHOSEN YOU, AND ORDAINED YOU, THAT
YE SHOULD GO AND BRING FORTH FRUIT.”—
St. John xv. 16.

A word for all—for each. Poor sufferer, for you who think there is so little for you to do. Look at an army—think of the various posts assigned to the soldier in the campaign. Here is a young man anxious to do much in action, but he is ordered on *out-post* duty to lie quiet while his comrades are in full action—but his is as noble a part as that of any other, if loyally done, for he does his duty where he is placed. And so our great Captain does with His soldiers. He has a great plan, and each He puts at the ordained post—some in the ministry—some in families—some in high and conspicuous positions—some at humble and monotonous duties, as it seems to them,—and *you*—He has placed you at *yours*—on a bed of weakness. “Ah, my child,” He says, “I have chosen you, and ordained you—even on that bed you may bear

fruit for Me; you may, by My Holy Spirit's help, train, beautify, and ennoble your character, by patient acceptance of My will concerning you, for I have chosen you for a place with Me hereafter, for which I am training you *now* on earth. You may pray for others as I did from My cross of weakness; you may teach others that there is a strength made perfect in weakness, for they do (though unknown to you) take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. Yes, if you are fighting or resting, praying, suffering, or rejoicing at that post where I have placed you—you will bear fruit—in your own heart and in that of others."

And remember the end—the *victory*. An army *shares* the triumph of its Commander; no matter how humble the share of the *individual* soldier may have been, he and all rejoice together. The poor lone woman, who did "what she could," will be as dear to the Master as an Apostle who "turned the world upside down" in that day.

O what a day that will be. That day is coming, and I shall share His victory, for I am a poor soldier of Jesus Christ, unworthy though I be. "They also serve who only stand and wait." Lord, let me thus serve and wait, let me be faithful to death.

ST. PAUL'S VIEW OF LIFE AND DEATH.

A FEW THOUGHTS FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS. A LETTER WRITTEN BY ST. PAUL, WHEN IN CONFINEMENT AT ROME, TO A CHURCH HE LOVED MUCH.

VERSE 19.—He is in bonds, and suffering from the opposition and malice of enemies. But what is his opinion of all his suffering? “*This shall turn to my salvation,*” i.e., to my highest good. The words are an echo of Romans viii. 28: “All things work together for good to them who love God.” And what a comforting thought for me in my suffering and weakness—“*This shall turn to my salvation.*” Oh, Father! grant me more and more to believe this precious promise, for Christ’s sake.—Amen.

Verses 20, 21.—*St. Paul’s view of life.*—“To me to live is Christ.” Verse 20.—“That Christ

may be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death." And, Saviour, may this, too, be my prayer—that in my sufferings and bodily weakness, by my patience, and faith, and resignation, Thou mayest be magnified—that I may by endurance witness for Thee and the power of Thy grace.

St. Paul's view of death.

Verse 21.—"To die is gain."

Verse 23.—To die is "to be with Christ."

May I not look on death as *loss*? May I think of the life beyond as a *gain*? A *gain*, because it is a higher—grander—more perfect life. A *gain*, because there, there is freedom from pain, from sorrow, from death, from all that makes this world (amid all its beauty) so sad and disappointing.

And death is to be "*with Christ*"; with One who loves us so that He suffered and died for us. Surely, to be with Him means to have *all* that we can ask for or need. With Him, too, will be hereafter all that we have ever loved or valued in Him; for Jesus said—

"Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given Me be *with Me* where I am, that they may behold My glory." "If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again—them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

“He that spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all, shall He not *with* Him freely give us all things?”

Yes—Christ is the pledge of all we need hereafter.

Verse 29.—“Unto you it is given—not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”

What a help this verse is. My Father has given me this suffering to bear. It is no mark of His displeasure, but a mark of His love, and, borne patiently, it is “for Christ’s sake.” Lord Jesus, make me like Thyself, “Perfect through suffering;” lead me through Calvary to Heaven—through loss to gain—through weariness to rest—through death to life.

THREE GIFTS OF GOD IN HOLY SCRIPTURES.

“WHATSOEVER things were written aforetime were written for our learning ; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope.”—Romans xv. 4.

Precious words—Patience—Comfort—Hope—these are three gifts of the Scripture to man. Well did Saint Augustine say,—The Bible was the only Book in which he found One who said, “Come unto Me and I will give you rest.”

Patience—Comfort—Hope—Oh ! how they speak of rest to the weary heart.

I.—*Patience*.—Ah ! there are times when we are impatient.

Impatient (*a*) *with GOD*, who seems to deal so strangely, so hardly with us ; who permits so much evil, so much sorrow and sin.

And (*b*) *Impatient with others*, their failings and infirmities.

And (c) *Impatient with ourselves.*

But we go to this old Book and read its pages—we stand face to face with the Eternal One and the patient life of Jesus, and we learn to be patient, too, in the school of the Holy Ghost.

(a) *Patient with God.* Because a thousand years to us are but as a day to Him ; because His ways, too, are not as ours are ; because He knows what is best for ourselves and others.

And (b) *Patient with others*, even as God is with us, and has ever been, from our youth up until now, “Patient, though provoked every day.”

And (c) *Patient with ourselves.* Yes, with our complaining, sinful, restless, stained hearts and lives ; because we believe He will continue His work in us, and, day by day, make us, by His Holy Spirit, more and more worthy of Himself. God is, in the fifth verse of this chapter, called “The God of patience.” Oh ! may He grant you patience, for “you have need of patience” indeed. . . .

II.—*Comfort.*—Oh ! there are times when our hearts fail us for fear, when we feel like children deserted and alone in the universe. Where shall we turn for comfort, then ? To Him who speaks in these sacred pages—“The Holy Ghost, the

Comforter"—who spake by the Prophets. Here, as we read, the Father draws near, and comforts us; His rod and staff comfort us; He leads us to green pastures, and makes us lie down by the still waters. Oh, may He, "the God of all comfort," comfort thee in every season of trial and need.

III.—"*Hope*."—We also need *hope*. We look forward to the bitter future, to days of pain and weariness, with no hope of health and life beyond. The night is dark—we are sinful and unworthy—can we ever hope for admission to His kingdom and glory? Where shall we go for *hope*? To Him again who speaks to us here in words of love—who has given us words of *promise*—scattered through His Word: "I will give thee rest," "My sheep *shall* never perish," and hundreds of others which will recur to you.

Oh! in hours of despair and loneliness, lift up thy eyes, and see above thee some one of these promises shining like a star from heaven, and go on, for it will guide thee home—to that land where hope and faith are lost in sight—in the immediate presence of Christ.

"Patience—Comfort—Hope." May God give me more of these, for He knows I need them. Oh! blessed Jesus, may I sit like

Mary, or lie down at Thy blessed feet, and listen to the still small voice in which Thou dost speak to me in Thy Holy Word, and then go forth to do Thy will? "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

St. Luke ix.

AT even the Saviour ascends the mountain with some of His Disciples to pray (verse 29), and to seek strength and comfort from His Father in Heaven.

As He prays, and the Disciples sleep, a heavenly glory transfigures Him, and they awake and see Him, and hear the Father's voice giving "honour and glory to His beloved Son" (See 2 St. Peter i. 17-18).

For once they see Him in His glory, the glory He ever veiled on earth. The vision was no doubt given to comfort them, and help them to bear the burden of the coming Passion. Sufferer, there are times in the Christian life when He speaks to the soul, and shews His glory as never before. Such times may come but seldom—but they come to cheer thee and brace *thee for the future*. . . . But is not Jesus

ever seen by His Disciples in transfiguration glory? There He stands before us in His sacred Word—little to the careless and worldly is to be seen—but behind that cloud *there* He is—"the King in His beauty." The one perfect life full of loveliness, purity, heroism, sympathy, tenderness, "moving with heavenly glory crowned;" and as we read the story of that wondrous life, we too can hear the Father's voice saying, "This is My Son—hear Him."

O Jesus, "show me Thy glory"—the "*cloud*" of sorrow lies heavy on me—and I am in trouble—but open my blind eyes to gaze on Thee, and think of Thee as Thou art now in Heaven. I would build for Thee a tabernacle in my poor heart—let the glory of the Lord dwell in it, and change me, day by day, by Thy Spirit, from glory to glory, as I gaze on Thee.

Three precious truths are brought before us in this narrative.

1st.—The presence of a *Father* with us in all our life—in sorrow and in trial, ever looking upon us in love as "My beloved Son."

2nd.—The *continuity* of human life. Moses and Elias, the departed ones, still live on, and the hopes and enthusiasms which they cherished long ago are theirs still—"the redemption of the world." They appear in glory, and "speak

of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

3rd.—*Death* is the gate of life; *part* of God's plan, even in the life of His beloved Son, looked forward to here, with joy and hope rather than pain is, "His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

And these three great truths, are they not comforting? Do they not transfigure the life that believes in them?

The conviction that a *Father* is with us, that death is not the *end*, but that we still live on with the same hopes and enthusiasms that we once had on earth, in the society of just men made perfect—that death is the gate of life—not defeat, but victory—not an end, but the beginning of a new life. Oh, is there not here something to cheer the bed of pain, and gild our humble, earthly life, with unearthly glory and heavenly hope? Oh, suffering heart, take these facts home; you too have a decease before you to accomplish like the Master; but beyond all this pain and sorrow there is a brighter life—therefore for the "joy" beyond, endure the cross, and like your Master go trustfully on in the path marked out for you; secure of a Father's smile, and a heavenly home at last, when the *warfare* of earth has been swallowed *up in victory*.

Lastly.—The transfiguration joy comes but once. Jesus goes down into the cold world again, into the valley of human life, to live, as the remaining part of the chapter tells, amid the bitterness, and strife, and intolerance of men ; but amid all this there is a heavenly calm—the rest of a soul that has a heavenly hope. And so, child of God, do not expect always the *joy* of the Lord, and comfort in prayer. No, you must go down from the mount, and take up your life in the valley of earth ; but whatever that life may be, in the world among men, or in a sick room and alone, carry the Divine thought of a brighter world and of a heavenly life with you. This will transfigure your life, it will brighten and cheer the lives of others to see you reflecting, on a bed of weakness, the light which comes from communion and fellowship with Jesus Christ.

THE MASTER PRAYING.

St. John xvii. 17, 21, 24.

THE Master is praying for His own—those whom He was leaving in the world behind Him. As He stands there in the supper-room, He gazes down the ages, and prays for “all who should believe on Him through their word.” Yes, for you, and for me, and for every weak, tired, and weary heart that looks to Him as a Saviour and Friend.

Oh! trembling disciple, is it not a help to know that He prayed for *you then*; but is it not something more to know that He who lived, and died, and rose again, *day by day* intercedes in Heaven for thee still?

And what are some of the things the Master asks for us? Let us listen to His words.

First, for our sanctification (verse 17). “*Sanctify them,*” that His word may sink down into our hearts, and, by the power of His

grace, bring forth fruit in our hearts and lives. "Sanctify them;" keep them from evil in an evil world; keep them through Thy own Name.

And, O Jesus, if I am called to suffer, and to know what pain and loneliness are, may it not be the way in which the Father has been pleased to answer Thy prayer for me, to make me, too, perfect through suffering, that Christ may be glorified in me (verse 10).

Secondly, He prays for our *unity* (verse 21). "That they may be one." He has been telling us in the preceding chapter to love one another. He prays that we may do so; that we may be one; that the world may believe in Him, seeing the love of Christians one for another.

Oh, Jesus, lift me into a higher atmosphere than that too common around me; let me look beyond all the divisions and differences I see around me, and see but one Church—those, whoever and wherever they may be, who kneel before Thy cross, and call themselves by Thy Name.

Thirdly, He prays for our union with Him hereafter (verse 24). Could He have asked for more? Can we want more? For to be with Him where He is now is the pledge of every blessing for spirit, mind, and body.

Union with God, union with one another in a perfect life of love, and health, and joy, that will be to be "with Him," that will be Heaven.

O Saviour, Thou didst pray for me, Thou dost pray still for me, "that I may be with Thee." How vile, how unworthy I am ; but I will not fear. Thou dost say, "Fear not. It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

E A S T E R.

1 Cor. xv. 20.

WE live in a world of sorrow and death. Friend after friend departs, and none returns to tell us if there be a life beyond and a resurrection! You look around you; there is the instinct of your heart which tells you there is a life beyond; but reason whispers, it may be all a dream. No, you want something more than a wish, or a hope, or a perhaps to rest upon. You want *a fact*. Have you got one? Yes, the historical *fact* of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here is the warrant—the pledge of the life to come, of the resurrection, of my own resurrection.

And here alone is the spring of comfort and hope for you and everyone, for here you have a *solid fact* to rest upon. Read those accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ—they ring with truth—the men who believed in that resurrec-

tion were convinced in spite of themselves, and then went out to a life of work and a death of shame, because they preached that great truth.

The resurrection of Christ is the greatest event that ever took place, and has the greatest consequences resting on it; for the nature that He wore, we wear, and that nature we know now *is* immortal and capable of a resurrection life.

Christ is risen! once grant *that*, and what is the consequence, *others* shall rise. He is "the first-fruits of them that sleep." The resurrection of the disciple is ever bound up with the life of Christ, "For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thes. iv. 14); and so Christ says Himself, "Because I live, ye shall live also." The Lord is risen! Oh, may Easter joy be yours. Think of this blessed *fact*, and rest upon it in every hour of depression and sorrow, and it will brace you and cheer you for the future, for life, and for death. In the life of Christ there came sorrow first, and then the glory; and so with us, through death we pass to life, through Calvary to Heaven. "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17).

FAITH.

"BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HAVE NOT SEEN, AND
YET HAVE BELIEVED."—St. John xx. 29.

SUCH are the words which fell from Jesus after the wonderful confession of St. Thomas.

Notice, first, how *prophetic* they seem. You have many instances in the Gospels of Jesus looking far into the future and seeing the things that should be hereafter. He calmly says of an unknown woman, who had anointed Him with precious ointment—that, that act should be commemorated wherever throughout *the world* His Gospel should be preached. He stands under the Cross, and says calmly, that lifted up upon it, He will draw all hearts to Himself.

He stands in the supper-room calm in the hour of apparent failure and defeat, and yet sees in the distant centuries the great numbers who should believe on Him (St. John xvii. 20).

And so here. He looks onwards, upon all who would become His disciples, who must believe without sight, if they would believe at all; upon every struggling soul throughout all the ages, upon you, and all of us, and whispers, "Blessed are they who have not seen, but believe in Me."

What a word of encouragement for us—for us who often find it so hard to believe—for us in hours of doubt, and sorrow, and pain, and trial—for us who long to have seen Him, to hear a word from His own lips to settle all our fears—it seems to tell us that He recognizes all the difficulties of faith, and has uttered these words for our comfort and encouragement, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe."

It is *trust* which Jesus calls "blessed." The Christian is one who *trusts* in Christ. Trusts Him for *pardon*—for *grace*, and *help*, in time of need, for the clearing up of all the clouds hereafter, for a *home* which will never fade or pass away. All the promises of Jesus Christ are given to *Faith* or *Trust*. He has never offered His followers any freedom from suffering or ignorance *here*, but He offers a full redemption of body, soul, and spirit, hereafter to all who *trust*. True indeed! and the wish is a natural

one *we* would have had it otherwise—we would have been spared the long and painful discipline and suspense of the present—but we cannot be choosers. Let us accept with patience and calm resignation the lot marked out for us—the life He has given us, and climb up the mountain-side, trusting in our Guide, that He knows better than we, that we shall know all things some day, and that, though it be night now, the sun shall rise yet in all his glory upon the landscape of life and in the light of the eternal morning we shall know as we have been known, and know then the blessedness of those who have believed and trusted Him for all. Dear sufferer, trust on ; He sees all and knows all ; bear bravely all to the last ; there is no failure, no defeat, no death in the army of the Captain of our salvation ; live in Him, trust Him, die trusting in Him, and some day you shall hear His voice, “Come, blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” “Be not afraid—only believe.”

OUR SAVIOUR'S SYMPATHY.

St. Mark viii. 1 ; Gospel for Seventh Sunday after
Trinity.

How beautifully do the opening verses bring out the considerate thoughtfulness of the Saviour. He enters into the wants of these people, goes with them on their journey, and sees them fainting on the way-side; and so He feeds them—feeds the body as well as the soul. This considerate thoughtfulness, which is another word for sympathy, was a constant feature in the Saviour's dealings with men and women. How He felt for that poor widowed woman at Nain; for those weeping sisters at Bethany; for those blind men amid the crowd who pressed on Him at Jericho; for His mother, in her lonely agony after His death. Yes, and He is the same still; and when a heart is in sorrow, and agony, and trial, now on earth, He sees all, knows all, and has a sympathy for that one case as if there were no other in the world. Sufferer, take that thought home. His eye rests on you, and He enters into all the history of your loneliness and sorrow.

ST. PAUL IN TIME OF DANGER.

"I BELIEVE GOD, THAT IT SHALL BE EVEN AS
IT WAS TOLD ME."—Acts xxvii. 25.

St. Paul is and has been in great danger, in a terrible tempest, from which there seemed no hope of escape for him and those on board. A message of love has reached Him from Heaven which calmed his fears; and now, resting on God's words, he speaks these words so full of faith, "I believe God, that it shall be as it was told me."

And I am tried and tossed, too, on the waves of this sorrowful world. My life is full of heaviness, and pain, and weariness; and as I look into the future there is little hope for me as far as this world is concerned; but I need not despair, God has spoken—spoken to me by His Son, Christ Jesus. He tells me of *a life beyond*, in which is no more pain and sorrow; and though I often feel this message so hard to take home, I will try and say—though my poor

heart sinks—"I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

And He tells me of *a forgiveness* of sins by the merits of Christ Jesus. Ah, I need it. I cannot understand that Atonement, or my interest in it, but I will rest on those words which speak to me of pardon and of peace through the blood of the cross, and say, "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."

And what more? I am weak and dying, but Jesus Christ says, "He is with me always," and that word says, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." Ah, Saviour! I die. I pass away, and sink below the waves, but still I trust in Thee for all I need; for I rest on *Thy* Word, and not on myself. "I believe that it shall be even as it was told me."

That is faith, the highest faith, the Christian victory. And in that day when we struggle through the chill waves of death to land, we shall find on the shores of Paradise that God has not disappointed us.

“THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD.”

“I SHOULD UTTERLY HAVE FAINTED, BUT THAT I
BELIEVE TO SEE THE GOODNESS OF THE LORD
IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING.”—Psa. xxvii. 15.

How grand, how noble is this aspiration—the fit aspiration of thousands of hearts. The *great reformer* who sees the wrongs, and crimes, and faults of his age, and, trying to redress them, finds too often his life's efforts a failure, feels there is a better time in the distance; and so he toils on in faith because he hopes “to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”

And so the *Christian*, thinking over his condition, realizing the failures and sorrows of life, finds an expression for his feelings here in these words, “I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” I look around me at human life—on this great mass of humanity

stained with sorrow and sin—and while *men* doubt and deny the goodness of God, I look up to Heaven, into the far-off future everlasting, and I say, “I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” This faith in a goodness yet to be revealed is the secret of all comfort in working for God. We believe to see His goodness in the land of the living, else we should have fainted. Yes, that land where many a dark mystery will be cleared up, will be Heaven. Heaven is a place where we shall behold the *goodness* of the Lord. His *goodness* to the whole family of His children on earth in their redemption from evil, physical and moral. His *goodness* to *me* in all my past and future life. Oh, you in sorrow, in these weary hours of pain and disease, make these words your own, and look forward to that better land. Christ spoke of it, and promises it to you in His Word. You are often cast down, no doubt. Yes; but not *utterly*! Wait for that land. “Tarry thou the Lord’s leisure; be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lord” (verse 16).

“UNKNOWN, YET WELL-KNOWN.”

2 Cor. vi. 9.—(St. Simon and St. Jude.)

“THE glorious company of the Apostles” (Te Deum), how great, how noble they were! The benefactors of the race for ever; the truest, bravest, purest hearts that ever lived; and yet *how little* do we know of them.

St. John and St. Peter, we know much of them, and, alas! of *Judas Iscariot* (the man of Kerioth), we know much too; of St. James, who died the earliest, we know some things, too; of St. Thomas we have a few fine touches, which reveal his character to us; and we know a little of St. Philip, St. Matthew, St. Andrew, and St. Nathanael; but the three last, St. Simon, St. Jude, and St. James-the-Less, how little do we know of *them*, *two* of whose lives and work come before us to-day. Simon the *zealot* (or, in the Aramaic,

"Kananite," it is the same as zealot) must have been once one of the band of the discontented zealots whose zeal made them spare no effort or risk in stirring up the Jews to hate their Roman conquerors, and throw off their yoke. Beneath the guidance of Christ, Simon, we may be sure, learned a better way to freedom—the great principles of the Gospel of Peace, of the Prince of Peace, what the character of the reign and kingdom of the true Messiah and Deliverer of Israel was to be. We know nothing more of him than his name tells us. We know nothing of his future work and labours as an Apostle; but his Master did, and does. "Unknown, but well-known" — his life is written in these words in the Lamb's Book of Life, as hidden with Christ in God.

And St. Jude—Judas (a common name among the Jews)—we know nothing of him; we read that he spoke some words in the supper-room (see St. John xiv. 22) which drew some beautiful words from Jesus; but we know nothing more of him. It was most probably St. Jude, the brother of James, the Lord's brother, that wrote the Epistle of St. Jude, not Jude the Apostle. He is, probably, the same as Thaddeus or Lebbeus. But, though we *know little of him*, too, Christ does and did.

His history is written in the words, "Unknown, but well-known."

"Unknown, but well-known." The Scriptures were written to reveal Christ; His servants and Apostles nobly and humbly buried themselves. The Acts of the Apostles is not, perhaps, the best name for that book. It is written to shew us the Saviour using certain Apostles to carry on His work in the world. Much is hidden and passed over that we should have wished to know; but enough is told us for our comfort, and patience, and hope. It would, no doubt, have helped us and interested us to know more and much of those noble Apostles; but we must rest in our ignorance. He knows them well, and they are with Him in glory now. Is there not a comforting thought in this text for us? How little are we known on earth. How unknown are the mass of Christians. No pen tells to the world their patience, their sorrows, their struggles, and conquests; but Christ their Master knows them and sees them all; and though their names are not written or even known on earth, they are written in Heaven. "Unknown, yet well-known." Trembling, lonely disciple, wrestling with pain, and sorrow, and weakness, Jesus speaks to thee. "My child, I see all, and I know thee well—all

thy struggles, and fears, and fightings. Toil on,
and be faithful to death, in thy lonely life on
earth, and I will give thee in My kingdom the
crown of life and glory.

“ST. PAUL THE AGED.”

1 Timothy i. 12-17.

THIS letter is one of St. Paul's latest epistles. He knows that he is indeed Paul the Aged now, worn out and shattered by a life of anxiety and toil. He knows that the care of the various churches must soon fall to younger hands. And this letter he is writing to *one* of these, his dearest child in the faith, Timothy. At such times men naturally look back. So does St. Paul on a ministry of thirty years. Visions rise before him of numbers led to the Master's feet,—the sad and sorrowing who had been comforted and cheered by the Gospel of Hope; the faithful hearts that had borne with him the burden and heat of the day. But that *thirty years* of blessed service is not all. There is a further past—a sad one!—"who was before a blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious" (see Acts xxii. 19; xxvi. 9-11). The murderer of

Stephen the most promising son of the Church! the foe of Jesus Christ! the man that had made many a Christian's heart to bleed with sorrow that could no more be healed on earth! Yes! it was all too true. But—"I obtained mercy." On this icy, rocky heart the warm rays of the loving Sun of righteousness had shone, and melted it into penitence and love. A river of life had welled forth from the smitten rock which years had only deepened. Henceforth his one desire is to know and serve Christ. "The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

What know we of St. Paul's experience? We cannot all be brought to Christ as he was, for God deals *variously* with His children.

Some grow up in His service, like Samuel and the Baptist, from their birth and baptism. *Others* too, though oft careless and self-willed, are led hardly without a struggle by the Holy Spirit, as manhood or womanhood dawns, into the deeper knowledge of Christ. *Others* know the life because they have *lived* it. "They know the doctrine to be of God, because they do His will."

Others, alas! wander grievously; and, like the *Prodigal*, are brought back after long years of

worldliness, and sin, or unbelief; and just in proportion as God's grace has reclaimed them they love Him—"for to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much." And so it was in a sense with St. Paul.

But St. Paul's inner life of faith and union with Christ we may know something of—a *little* of. See in these verses three characteristic features of a Christian heart as it lives in Christ Jesus.

1st.—*Humility*. "*The chief of sinners.*" All is ascribed to God's grace, compassion, and mercy.

2nd.—This grace received and welcomed by the heart, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" brings forth "*faith and love*" towards Him in our poor hearts—with "faith and love in Christ Jesus."

3rd.—*Hopefulness* for others (verse 16). The true Christian knows his own nothingness; he knows what Christ has done and does for him; he knows that Christ is still to all men a Saviour and Redeemer; he dares to look into the future, on millions yet in darkness and unbelief, and believe that they will obtain mercy too; he "faintly trusts the larger hope," and believes that the long-suffering love of Jesus, will yet conquer his rebellious and unbelieving

children ; and that to God shall yet be "honour and glory for ever and ever," in a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Gratitude, praise, thanksgiving, run through the whole passage.

“BE NOT AFRAID, ONLY
BELIEVE.”

St. Mark v. 36.

JESUS spoke these words to a poor, anxious, despairing father eighteen hundred years ago. He speaks them to thee to-day. To thee, weak, suffering, dying, thy Redeemer says, “My child, be not afraid, only *believe*, only *trust* Me, only take Me at My word. Rest in Me. I will raise thee up and give thee eternal life with Me and Mine in the deathless land. Fear not, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” “Fear not, only believe.”

Psalm xxiii.

THE Lord is my shepherd : therefore can I lack nothing.

He shall feed me in a green pasture : and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.

But Thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

